# Searching for OER Worksheet Image of a human character holding a large magnifying glass.

Finding materials on the web is not just about typing in keywords. Your time is valuable and you’ll find if you spend a few moments planning your search, your results will be more aligned to exactly what you are looking for.

**Step 1:** Ask the question! Use the space below to brainstorm a search question. What is the subject? Consider what the search should show you; it could be by file type including documents, video, audio, interactive games or a particular language, or reading level. Maybe there are specific phrases or titles you want. Maybe you want results from a particular region or within a certain range of numbers (dates or monetary amounts for example). Consideration of all of these items can help you refine and filter your results.

**Step 2:** Identify as many synonyms for key terms that you can. Write them down so you can refer to them as you start searching.

**Step 3:** From your key terms, decide which describe your topic. What words do you want as part of your search result? What words must appear together? (This is called a phrase.) Are there any words related to your topic that you want included or excluded? Options to narrow your results include language, specific web sites or domains, reading level and licensing options to refine your search. Some common symbols (or operators) to help refine your search: Quotes (“ ”) mean a phrase, terms must appear together. The symbol “ + “mean to include words and “ – “ to exclude words. An example could be: “Star Trek” +Voyager –“Deep Space Nine”

**Step 4:** Use Google’s Advanced Search to compose your search query. (On Google’s home page select “Settings” in the lower right corner and choose “Advanced.” On the page that opens, you will start to plug in your various terms and filters.) Write down what you searched for and what type of results you received. Modify your search using your identified synonyms or other options. Don’t forget to choose the licensing option to find OER!